



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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OUR WORK.

House of Education.—Next term begins on Thursday, September 30th. There are still one or two vacancies for Three Months' Students *who do not propose to teach.*

Parents' Review School.—In consequence of enquiries for holiday tasks, it may be well to state that, though no work is set for the holidays, it would be well for members of the P.R.S. to use them for making "collections" for the Natural History Exhibition, to be held in May, 1898.

The Committee strongly urge on all members of the *Mother's Educational Course* and *Parents' Review School* the advisability of joining the P.N.E.U. They already subscribe for the *Parents' Review*, and would find the additional 4s. would secure for them the following advantages:—

- 1.—They would form part of a corporate body, and would receive notices of all new departures and organizations of the Union.
- 2.—They would have the free use of the Educational Library, kept at the office, 28, Victoria Street, S.W. (catalogue price 4d.)
- 3.—They would receive a free ticket for the Annual Conference.
- 4.—They would have the opportunity of attending lectures of Branches in the neighbourhood of which they may at any time find themselves.

Parents' Review Literary and Translation Societies.—The May selection for translation was the scene in Goethe's "Egmont," where the Count visits Clara in the costume of a knight of the order of the Golden Fleece. The translations were all of them extremely good, and all showed considerable knowledge both of the English and German Tongues.

Less advanced students should not hesitate to send in translations, as the aim of the Society is to give help to beginners as well as practice to those more deeply versed in the language.

The selection for August is Victor Hugo's Ode, "Aux Riunes de Montfort l'Amaury." The subject for the Literary Society for May was Spenser's "Shepherd's Calendar," and the answers to the questions were interesting and suggestive. The Society is much indebted to "A Friend" for communicating, through one of the papers sent in, a very scholarly contribution to the study of the works of Spenser.

The selection for August is Lord Beaconsfield's "Sybil."

BOOKS.

Harold, The Last of the Saxons, by Lord Lytton, edited by G. L. Gomme (Constable & Co., 3/6). Messrs. Constable have undertaken a very valuable piece of work under the editorship of Mr. Gomme. They propose to issue a series of historical novels in chronological order; and, with each novel, by way of introduction, a careful examination of the historical accuracy of the work, together with such notes and pictorial illustrations as should do much to put the period into historical perspective. Here, for example, we have a careful examination of the facts by Mr. Gomme. It is interesting to learn that of the fifty-six *dramatis personæ* who appear in *Harold*, all but nine are historical persons represented with great fidelity to

history. The long list of names of personages moving through the story impresses one the more with the power of a novel which carries such heavy ballast so easily that few persons would guess that there were more than a dozen characters in the book at the most. The numerous and admirable illustrations from the Bayeux Tapestry, Fairholt's *Costume in England* and other sources, make the work additionally useful. We should have liked to put the introduction, notes, etc., at the end of the volume, as we think the story should be read first, but in this matter the editor must be allowed to judge.

Messrs. Constable send us the first book of the *Fairie Queene*, by E. Spenser, edited by Miss Warren, with introduction and glossary. The Editor rightly remarks that there are "two things apt to hinder the enjoyment of the reader when he opens the *Fairie Queen* for the first time, the archaic language and the far-away air of the world of mediæval romance into which he is allured." Miss Warren's simple introduction does a good deal to bring the reader under the spell of Spenser's enchanting poem. The type is very good.

Stray Thoughts for Mothers and Daughters, by Lucy H. M. Soulsby (Longmans & Co., 2/6). Mothers will welcome Miss Soulsby's valuable thoughts on many questions which come to them; such subjects as *Mothers and Teachers*, *Daughters of To-day*, *Mothers and Day Schools*, afford opportunities for a careful discussion of, and wise advice upon, the very real difficulties which occur, in the relations of mothers and daughters especially. They do these things better in France. It is not uncommon to find in French families charming docility on the one hand and as charming affability and friendliness on the other, a really gay, happy relation between the two, which the English mother and daughter do not always arrive at. Miss Soulsby writes on this difficult subject understandingly and wisely. She says, "no higher education can make up to the daughter for the infinite loss she suffers, if division comes between her and her mother. No success on the daughter's part can make up to the mother for losing the happiness of feeling at one with her own child." She admits the alienation which school-life too often sets up, and succeeds, we think, in giving mothers the key to the situation, so that, even if the adored young High School mistress supplants the mother for a time, the latter, by her wise and gentle waiting, will succeed in winning back her child to a greater devotion than before. The point is all through that the mother must understand and lay herself out for her growing girls as she did while they were in the nursery. The chapters on the religious side of secular teaching and on the home education of girls are very suggestive. Indeed the volume is full of useful hints and stimulating ideas.

Biblia Innocentium: being the story of God's chosen people before the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ upon Earth, written anew for children, by J. M. Mackail, sometime Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford (Longmans, Green & Co., 6/-). This is all the introduction we get to what seems to us a work of very great value. Mr. Mackail may be congratulated on having executed a difficult task with unflinching reverence and faultless taste. In some two hundred chapters, each a page or two in length, he gives us the history of the Old Testament, including the visions

of the Prophets and the stories of the Apocrypha. One wonders why the history of Job is placed after that of Judith, for instance. The sections appear to be each a complete story or episode in singularly good type and under such inviting titles as, for example, the *Taskmasters*, the *Grandchildren*, *Angels' Bread*, *The Stolen Secret*. The language is as nearly as possible the language of the Bible. Where it is necessary to condense, the rhythm of the Biblical English is preserved. There is no attempt at explaining or eliding difficulties, unless in so far as modern criticism leads to a change of phrase; as, for example, "the *Accusing Angel* answered and said: All that a man has he will give for his life." Here at last we have a volume of scripture story, keeping for the most part the beauty of the original and omitting only those passages which should long ago have been omitted from all Bibles meant for children. The first chapter is entitled *The Fall of the Morning Star*, and is a rather Miltonic version of the story of Lucifer. One is inclined to think that the second chapter with its "in the beginning" should have headed the series, but probably Mr. Mackail is right in giving this epilogue as a key to the narratives that follow. We are grateful for the *Biblia Innocentium* and believe it will prove an exceedingly great boon to parents.

The Age of Wordsworth, by C. H. Herford, Litt. D. (Bell & Sons, 3/6). "Show me your friends and I'll tell you what you are," might be amplified into, "Let me know the current of thought and of philosophy in your age and I will predict something as to the trend of your own thought." This is Professor Herford's attitude with regard to Wordsworth, whose genius was played upon by the philosophic thought out of which came the French Revolution, and by the literary impulse working in many minds at home, before it bore the fruit of his noblest poetry. Professor Herford orders his facts, biographical and literary, covering the voluminous period from 1798-1830, by means of a certain key. "Romanticism," he says, "is the organising conception of the present volume." And he describes what is called Romanticism as the far-reaching and many-sided revival of imaginative power. Everything of importance written within the period in question bore, he considers, a relation, whether antagonistic or sympathetic, to this impulse of Romanticism. By means of this guiding idea, the author carries us, easily and pleasantly, through an amazing amount of philosophical and literary criticism. He begins at the beginning, that is, with philosophy, goes on through science, politics, religion, history, to the novel and the drama, and finally to poetry, considering the poets of the period under the headings of the Wordsworth group, the Scott group, the Shelley group. The whole is as brightly interesting as sympathetic thought and penetrating criticism can make it. We have seldom met with a more interesting hand-book.

Enlisted, or My Story, by Elise Sandes (Partridge & Co., 1/-). We are grateful to Miss Sandes for her story of work in the Cork Soldiers' Home. It is good to know how easy it is to reach the deep springs in the hearts of rough men, and how readily they respond to efforts, the object of which is to make the prodigal say, "I will arise and go to my Father."

Relics of Primeval Life, by Sir J. Dawson (Hodder and Stoughton, 6/-). "It is well," says Professor Dawson, "to take stock of what we do know and of what we may reasonably suppose, keeping always in view the fact that some parts of the problem of the origin of life are at present insoluble, and may possibly ever continue in that condition." This, briefly put, is the object of Professor Dawson's book. He gives us the chain of life traced backward in geological time. He concedes that, in the reduction of living things in the pre-Cambrian ages to few and synthetic types, evidence may be found of a natural approach to the beginnings of life, and to a condition of the earth in which life would be impossible. But he is at variance with the evolutionists in their demand for a practically infinite space of time, say four hundred millions of years, for the occurrence of that infinite series of chance interactions which is supposed to have resulted in the highest developments of life with which we are acquainted. In a word, Professor Dawson considers that we cannot arrive at a time so remote or a form of life so elemental as to obviate the necessity for a Cause. Even if regarded merely as a summary of geological discoveries, confined to relics of primeval life of however low a type, this volume is very interesting and instructive.

Studies of Lakeland Birds, by Mary L. Armitt (Middleton, Ambleside, 1/-). This is a very charming little book. The fifteen birds which are studied are not uncommon British birds, and, therefore, people who do not dwell in Lakeland may find in this volume opportunity to become intimate with feathered friends in their own neighbourhood. The birds are the Lesser Redpole, Grey Wagtail, Tree-Pipit, Redstart, Greenfinch, Willow-Warbler, Sedge-Warbler, Coal Titmouse, Long-tailed Titmouse, Dipper, Spotted Flycatcher, Wheatear, Wood-Warbler, Wren, Meadow-Pipit. Miss Armitt writes with a certain delicate charm of style which is very appropriate to her subject. She loves birds and writes of their traits and ways as one who is intimate with them. To most of us, birds are like the wind; they come and go and we cannot tell whence or whither; but here we are told the very day of the month on which to look out for the first redstart, to expect the first greenfinch on, perhaps, the first of April. We have hardly ever met with a book better fitted to help one to the knowledge that most of us covet, the power of recognising the "feathered peoples" by form and colour, flight, habitat, and note. The little volume is full of such dainty bits of description as the following: "Warm with good food, he breaks forth into jollity when the earth is frost-bound, and the sun's rays are shorn and red, when land and maybe lake birds are suffering, and chilled mortal stands to watch this sprite of the beck running and singing midst black waters and white ice festoons." We cannot imagine a more pleasant pocket companion on a rambling tour than Miss Armitt's *Studies of Lakeland Birds*. But let not the reader imagine that he may get a touch-and-go acquaintance with any bird. It is by hours of watching a single bird, by days of following it to its haunts, that the author has acquired the delightful and enviable intimacy she enjoys with what Gilbert White calls "the feathered nations."